

short-petioled leaves and broadly ovate, somewhat ciliate sepals 7 mm. long, is almost exactly intermediate between species and variety.

I have not been able to identify Béguinot's subsp. *homotricha*.

The conclusions here reached may be summarized as follows. Prof. Fernald (RHODORA xxi. 7-9 [1919] ) has well set forth the reasons why the generic name *Stellaria* is to be preferred to *Alsine* for the species of this group.

\* Median leaves of both sterile and flowering shoots rounded or narrowed at the sessile or subsessile base, oblong-lanceolate to oval; sepals 4-6 mm. long, obtuse or acutish, shorter than the petals, not at all or only inconspicuously ciliate.

STELLARIA PUBERA Michx. Fl. Bor. Am. i. 273 (1803). *Alsine pubera tennesseensis* Mohr, Cont. Nat. Herb. vi. 499 (1901). *Alsine tennesseensis* Small, Fl. S. E. U. S. 422 (1903), as to name-bringing synonym.—N. J. to Ind., south to Ga. and Ala.

\*\* Median leaves of sterile shoots abruptly contracted into petioles 1-2 cm. long, oval to broadly ovate; sepals 7.5-11 mm. long, acute or acuminate, equalling or exceeding the petals, at least the outer conspicuously ciliate on the lower half.

Var. **silvatica** (Béguinot), n. comb. *S. pubera*, subsp. *silvatica* Bég. Nuov. Giorn. Bot. Ital. n. s. xvii. 385 (1910). *Alsine tennesseensis* Small, l. c., as to plant described.—CONNECTICUT (where introduced); dooryard, Wilton, April, 1923, *Anna E. Carpenter* (G). OHIO: Chillicothe, May, 1885, *H. T. Safford* (US); near Cincinnati, April 27, 1879, *C. G. Lloyd* (US). INDIANA: wooded ravine near Lawrenceburgh, Dearborn Co., May 10, 1910, *Deam* (herb. C. C. Deam). KENTUCKY: cliffs of the Kentucky River, May, 1830, *H. H. Eaton* (G). TENNESSEE: bluffs along the Tennessee River, Knoxville, April, 1894, *S. N. Bain* (US); same locality, April, 1895, *Ruth* (G).

GRAY HERBARIUM.

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## THE NAME OF THE SPEARMINT.

S. F. BLAKE.

IN a recent paper in this journal, Mr. O. A. Farwell<sup>1</sup> has sought to show that the name *Mentha spicata* L., in general use for the spearmint for many years, belongs to the horse mint of Europe, usually called *M. longifolia*, and that the spearmint should be called *M. viridis*. In this interpretation of the Linnaean name Farwell departs

<sup>1</sup> "The correct name for the spearmint," RHODORA 26: 19-22. 1924.

not only from the usage of Hudson,<sup>1</sup> the first reviser of the complex Linnaean species *M. spicata*, but also from that of such critical modern students of the European flora as H. and J. Groves (Babington's Manual, ed. 9), Britten and Rendle (List of British Seed-plants, 1907), Schinz and Keller (Flora der Schweiz, ed. 4, 1923), and Wilmott (Babington's Manual, ed. 10), as well as from the practice of all recent American authors.

In the first edition of the Species Plantarum (1753) Linnaeus described *Mentha spicata* with three varieties— $\alpha$ . *viridis*,  $\beta$ . *longifolia*, and  $\gamma$ . *rotundifolia*. Hudson (1762), the next author to deal with these plants, raised the three varieties to specific rank. His species, corresponding to the Linnaean varieties in the order named, were called *M. spicata*, *M. longifolia*, and *M. rotundifolia*. In the second edition of the Species Plantarum (1763), Linnaeus split his *Mentha spicata* of 1753 into three species, as Hudson had done, but dropped the name *spicata*. Var. *longifolia* of 1753 became *Mentha sylvestris*, var. *viridis* became *M. viridis*, and var. *rotundifolia* became *M. rotundifolia*. As the pertinent descriptions in both editions of the Species Plantarum are copied in full by Mr. Farwell, it is unnecessary to reproduce them here.

Mr. Farwell evidently considers that the name *Mentha spicata*, as used by Linnaeus, represented an entity different from the three varieties included under it. His sole argument for the transfer of the name to the plant called *M. sylvestris* in the second edition of the Species Plantarum is given as follows: "of the eight citations under *M. sylvestris* six are from the var. *longifolia* and one from *M. spicata* the other being extraneous," while "of the seven citations under *M. viridis* 5 are from var. *viridis* (none from *M. spicata*), the others being extraneous." The fact that, of the two references given under *M. spicata* proper in 1753, the only one that is repeated in 1763 is placed under *M. sylvestris*, is considered to show that "*M. spicata* formed a part of *M. sylvestris* and not at all of *M. viridis*."

The reference on which Mr. Farwell lays so much stress is that from the Hortus Upsaliensis, "*Mentha floribus spicatis, foliis oblongis serratis*." Under this name Linnaeus combined, as var.  $\alpha$  and var.  $\beta$ , two plants which he had previously treated as species in the Hortus Cliffortianus. The Hortus Upsaliensis name, then, was merely a

<sup>1</sup> Fl. Angl. ed. 1, 221. 1762.

descriptive phrase intended to cover the common characters of the two varieties of which it was composed. The *Mentha spicata* of the first edition of the Species Plantarum was made up of the same two varieties and an additional one, and the Hortus Upsaliensis name was properly taken by Linnaeus as his specific phrase, covering as it did the two principal constituents of his species *M. spicata*. In this sense, and in this sense only, is Mr. Farwell right in saying that "*M. spicata* was founded on Hort. Ups. 168 [sp. no. 2]." The other citation under *M. spicata* proper, "*Mentha sylvestris, longioribus nigrioribus & minus incanis foliis. Bauh. pin. 227,*" was omitted in the second edition of the Species Plantarum. W. Sole, in his "*Menthae Britannicae*" (1798, p. 7), refers it to his *M. sylvestris* which, according to Baker (Journ. Bot. 3: 235. 1865), is *M. rotundifolia*, Sole's *M. rotundifolia* being *M. alopecuroides* Hull.

The explanation of Linnaeus' course is thus sufficiently clear. The name *Mentha spicata* of 1753 was simply a covering name for the three varieties included under it, as is shown both by his division of the species into vars.  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\gamma$ , and by his use as a specific phrase of a polynomial under which he had previously combined two of these three varieties. In 1763, realizing that his three varieties were specifically distinct, he dropped the name *spicata* (in which course he was followed by most botanists for about a century) and raised the varieties to species under the names *M. viridis*, *M. sylvestris*, and *M. rotundifolia*. The principal reference given under *M. spicata* in 1753 was placed under *M. sylvestris* (presumably because var.  $\alpha$  of the Hortus Upsaliensis reference represented this plant), but this action can by no means be taken to indicate that Linnaeus considered *M. spicata* referable *in toto* to *M. sylvestris*.

The single argument advanced in support of the transfer of the name *M. spicata* to the plant usually known as *M. longifolia* is thus shown to be invalid, while the customary application of the name is supported by two further points:—the fact that var.  $\alpha$  of *M. spicata*, which, other things being equal, would be considered to typify the species, is var. *viridis*; and the fact that Hudson, the first reviser of the complex Linnaean species, retained the name *M. spicata* for the spearmint (*M. spicata* L.  $\alpha$ . *viridis* L.).

It happens that the name of the spearmint is mentioned in the International Rules of Nomenclature as an example under Art. 49,

but with an authority assigned that is not in accord with present usage. The statement there made is as follows: "*Mentha spicata* L. var. *viridis* L. *Sp. Pl.*, ed. 1, p. 576 (1753) was raised to the rank of a species by Hudson, and must be called *Mentha spicata* Huds. *Fl. Angl.* ed. 1, 221 (1762) not *Mentha viridis* L. *Sp. Pl.*, ed. 2, p. 804 (1763)." It is perhaps impossible to decide whether var. *viridis* "was raised to the rank of a species by Hudson," as his first reference might indicate, or whether he considered the Linnaean *M. spicata* to be typified by its var.  $\alpha$ . *viridis* and adopted his specific name accordingly. At any rate, it is certain that the plant can not be called "*Mentha spicata* Huds." under any code of nomenclature in present use.

The customary citation of the accepted names of the two other mints described as varieties of *M. spicata* by Linnaeus, as *Mentha longifolia* (L.) Huds. and *M. rotundifolia* (L.) Huds., is based on the natural inference that Hudson's names were founded on those of Linnaeus. It is by no means clear, however, that this method of citation is correct. It is obvious that Hudson had the *Species Plantarum* before him when writing his descriptions. The omission of his customary reference to that work under these two species, however, involves the omission of anything that could be considered a "name-bringing synonym," since the citations from pre-Linnaean authors common to the two works can certainly not be regarded in that light. In neither the International Rules nor the American Code is there any statement as to the definiteness of reference to the earlier name required in nomenclatorial transfers in order to justify the use of a parenthetical authority. The question is a minor one, and very likely was not considered by the framers of either code. The commonly used expression "name-bringing synonym" certainly implies some sort of citation, and the fairly well established practice of not reading into a work more than the author himself put there points in the same direction. The mints described in the first edition of the *Species Plantarum* as *Mentha spicata*,  $\alpha$ . *viridis*,  $\beta$ . *longifolia*, and  $\gamma$ . *rotundifolia* are then properly designated as follows:

MENTHA SPICATA L. *Sp. Pl.* 2: 576. 1753.

*Mentha spicata*  $\alpha$ . *viridis* L. *Sp. Pl.* 2: 576. 1753.

*Mentha viridis* L. *Sp. Pl.* ed. 2, 2: 804. 1763.

MENTHA LONGIFOLIA Huds. Fl. Angl. 221. 1762.

*Mentha spicata*  $\beta$ . *longifolia* L. Sp. Pl. 2: 576. 1753.

*Mentha sylvestris* L. Sp. Pl. ed. 2, 2: 804. 1763.

MENTHA ROTUNDIFOLIA Huds. Fl. Angl. 221. 1762.

*Mentha spicata*  $\gamma$ . *rotundifolia* L. Sp. Pl. 2: 576. 1753.

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## NOTES ON THE PLANTS OF HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS.

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WHEN the History of Hingham was published by the town in 1893, there was included in it "The Botany of Hingham," by Thomas T. Bouvé, and "The Trees and Shrubs of Hingham," by his son, Edward T. Bouvé. Both of these men were long connected officially with the Boston Society of Natural History. Charles J. Sprague, the artist-botanist, coöperated with the elder Bouvé in the preparation of the Flora, and local botanists also assisted. The list is based on the sixth edition of Gray's Manual (1890).

No less than 877 plants are given, making it a very complete list for an area of 12,973 acres. There seem to be very few errors, although many of the species have subsequently had their names changed, and there have been many new segregates since 1890. Since I came to Hingham in 1908, and since Dr. C. A. Cheever came in 1917, each of us has explored the town, and each of us has kept a check-list of the local flora. There are still many species which we have not checked off, but we have succeeded in finding many of the plants which were reported as rare, and we have added several new species, not merely segregates, to the known flora of the town.

Five of the plants in the flora, *Asclepias verticillata*, *A. tuberosa*, *Gentiana crinita*, *Sarracenia purpurea* and *Sporobolus asper* are apparently extinct, and three others, *Phragmites communis*, *Kalmia latifolia* and *Epigaea repens* are nearly gone, while *Ilex opaca* is making a hard fight against being eliminated by the Christmas spirit.

Along the shore, in salt marsh openings, is an abundance of *Salicornia ambigua*, the perennial, along with the two annual species of the region. The young shoots of this plant, before they root into the sand, are curved, forming almost perfect circles for a few weeks be-